

October 2003

Port Initiates Terminal 4 Sediment Cleanup

Agreement with EPA Launches First Early Action for Portland Harbor

EPA and the Port of Portland recently signed a legal agreement called an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) to assess and clean up contaminated river sediment at the Port's marine Terminal 4. This agreement authorizes the first early action cleanup project in the Portland Harbor Superfund Site and reflects the Port's commitment to accelerate clean up of contaminated sediments in the Willamette River. The work will reduce risks to human health and the environment prior to the completion of the larger Portland Harbor investigation and will allow continued operation of the marine terminal.

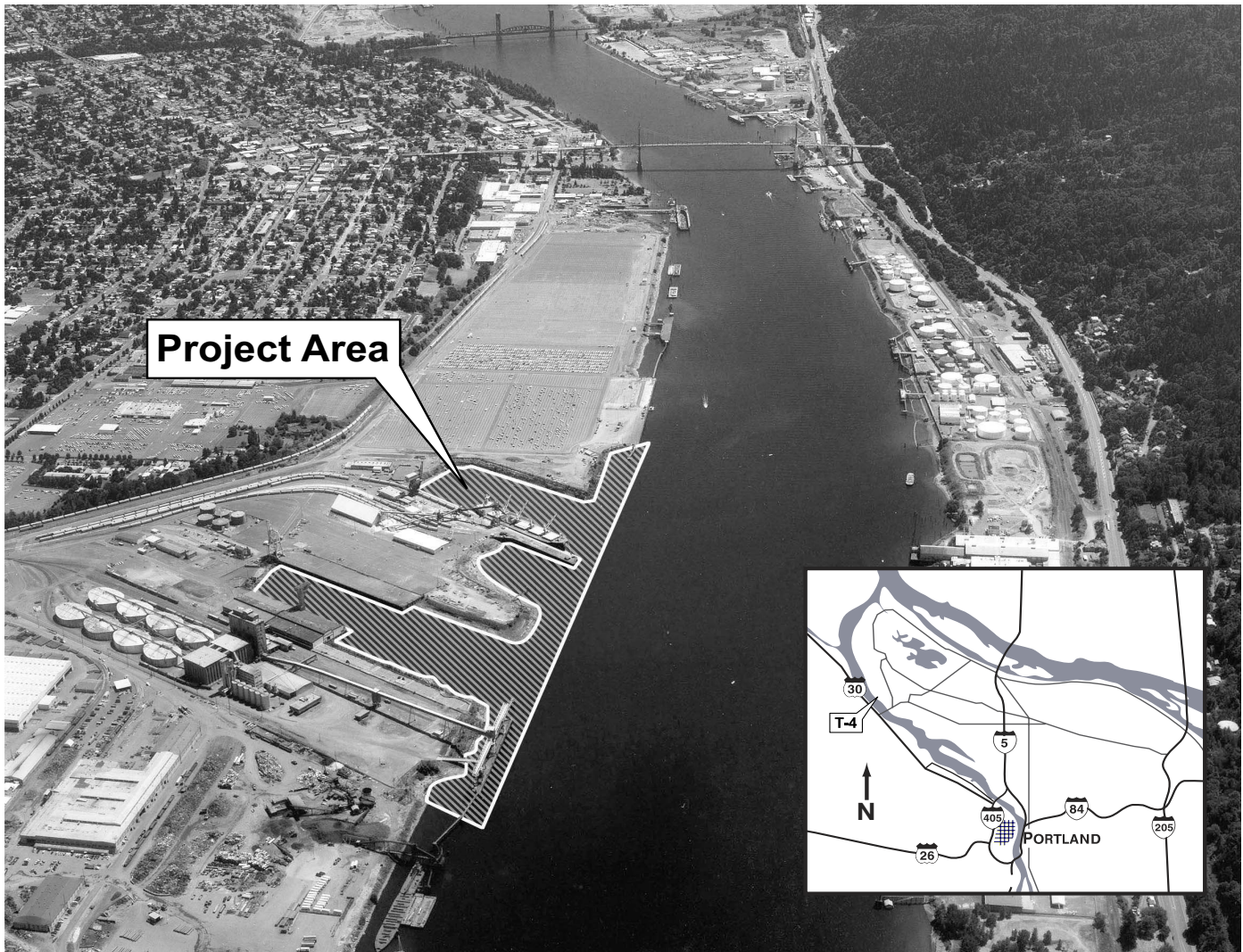
Under the agreement, the Port will investigate the nature and extent of sediment contamination in Terminal 4 and will recommend viable cleanup methods to EPA. EPA will oversee the Port's investigation work, and will make the final decision about what cleanup method to use. The Port and EPA will coordinate sediment cleanup with upland cleanup work taking place concurrently under the oversight of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The project will also be undertaken in partnership with the Native American Tribes and natural resources agencies already involved in the Portland Harbor investigation.

Marine Terminal 4 Is Part of the Portland Harbor Superfund Site

In December 2000, EPA added to its National Priorities List an industrialized stretch of the Lower Willamette River from Swan Island to the southern tip of Sauvie Island. EPA designated Portland Harbor a Superfund site because sediments in a stretch of the Lower Willamette River contain metals, pesticides, PCBs, petroleum products, and other contaminants at levels that threaten human health and the environment. Marine Terminal 4 is located within the Portland Harbor Superfund Site.

The Lower Willamette Group—consisting of the Port and some public and private entities that are potentially responsible for the costs of cleaning up the contamination—is working to clean up the contamination in the Portland Harbor sediments. EPA oversees the Lower Willamette Group's work and decides how the Portland Harbor sediments cleanup proceeds. The sediment cleanup is being coordinated with upland cleanup overseen by DEQ. The Lower Willamette Group, EPA and DEQ are working closely with Native American Tribes and natural resource agencies. The Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group provides opportunities for the public to give feedback and learn about the work.

The Terminal 4 early action cleanup will be closely coordinated for consistency with ongoing activities to clean up the Portland Harbor. The Terminal 4 sediment cleanup is called an "early action," because it will be finished before the Portland Harbor cleanup is completed.



Terminal 4 project area of Portland Harbor. Inset shows the Port's position on the Willamette River.

Contamination at Terminal 4 Is from Years of Historical Uses

Marine Terminal 4 is located on the east side of the Willamette River just north of the St. Johns Bridge, in the Rivergate Industrial District. The area being cleaned up is along the northern half of marine Terminal 4, including Slip 1, Slip 3, and Wheeler Bay. Historically, the terminal was used for loading and unloading petroleum products, pencil pitch, liquid fertilizer, soda-ash, metals, and agricultural products.

Some investigation work has already been completed and shows the presence of various contaminants in the sediments, including petroleum products, metals, pesticides, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) at levels that threaten human health and the environment.

The Port of Portland is paying for all Terminal 4 early action cleanup costs, from investigation through implementation of the selected cleanup method.

The following timeline has been suggested for the study and planning leading to site cleanup:

ACTIVITY	TIME PERIOD
Investigation	Early 2004 through Fall 2004
Development & Analysis of Cleanup Alternatives	Fall 2004 through late 2005
Selection of Cleanup Method	Early 2006
Design of Selected Cleanup Method	Thru 2006
Implementation of Cleanup	Starting 2007

How to Get Involved

The Port of Portland and EPA welcome public participation in decisions for the Terminal 4 sediment cleanup. During the next few months, look for fact sheets and notices with more detailed information about the establishment of a mailing list, an information repository, community interviews, and preparation of a community involvement plan. Contact Judy Smith at EPA and Sue Safford at the Port, using the information below if you would like to share ideas or information about Terminal 4 outreach.

For More Information

Visit the EPA Website at:
<http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/T4>

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